

Fordham News



President's COVID-19 Update | March 9, 2020, 12 p.m.

BY FORDHAM NEWS ON MARCH 9, 2020

UNIVERSITY NEWS

The message below was sent to the Fordham community on March 9 at 12 p.m.

Dear Members of the Campus Community,

Effective 1 p.m. today (Monday, March 9), we are taking the significant step of suspending face-to-face instruction on all Fordham's New York-area campuses. Face-to-face classes are suspended for the remainder of Monday, March 9, and Tuesday, March 10. (Existing online instruction will continue uninterrupted.) All residential students are encouraged to return home immediately. Beginning with the start of classes on Wednesday, March 11, faculty will teach their classes online or electronically. Over the coming days, the University will also curtail some oncampus operations and redirect specific personnel to work remotely rather than coming to campus.

Over the weekend, we learned of an undergraduate commuter student who exhibited symptoms consistent with the coronavirus. That student has been tested for the virus, and is self-isolating at home. We will inform the campus community immediately if we learn that the lab result is positive for the COVID-19 virus. If the student is in fact positive for the virus, following established protocols, the New York City Department of Health will work in concert with University Health Services to reach everyone with whom the student has been in contact, and University staff will also follow-up on this initial contact with each person.

We reported on March 6 that the parent of a prospective student fell ill in Duane Library. The parent was tested and found to be negative for the COVID-19 virus. We also had previously reported that there were two faculty members and three students who may have been exposed to COVID-19 off campus. Following the guidelines of the CDC, out of an abundance of caution they are self-isolating at home for 14 days, and the faculty are teaching their courses

online. In all cases, we have been checking daily for any appearance of symptoms with students, faculty, and staff members who are self-isolating at home. **As of this morning there are no confirmed cases of COVID-19 at Fordham.**

We are making the decision to cancel face-to-face classes now and transition to online/electronic instruction, because we want to reduce potential pathways for community spread of COVID-19 on campus. Our actions are also consistent with Governor Cuomo's declaration of a state of emergency in New York on Saturday, March 7, and the updated Coronavirus guidelines issued by the CDC on Friday, March 6. Though this is an undeniable disruption of the academic enterprise, we feel that it is the best way to minimize the risk of spreading the virus within the campus community.

What does this mean?

- Face-to-face classes will not meet on campus, effective 1 p.m. today, March 9, until further notice. (Classes will resume online/electronically Wednesday through Friday, March 11 through 13.) Deans will be providing guidance to students from their school/college. Each instructor will be communicating with their students how their specific class will proceed in an online environment.
- Spring break will run as scheduled from March 14 through 22 (except for the Graduate School of Education, the spring break for which is April 14-18).
- Students are advised to take what they need from their rooms before leaving campus for spring break, i.e.: all textbooks, notes, course materials, etc., with them, so that they can continue their coursework online without returning to campus after the break.
- After the break, classes will resume, in an online format, on Monday, March 23: during that week the University will evaluate, in consultation with public health authorities, whether conditions allow students to return to campus, and resume face-to-face instruction on March 30. The Office of the Provost has offered guidance to instructors regarding online instruction. Faculty Technology Services provides myriad support for online technologies.
- Effective immediately, University-sponsored student travel (both international and domestic) will be cancelled/postponed, with limited exceptions for intercollegiate athletics.
- Effective immediately, non-essential university-sponsored international travel for faculty, administrators, and staff will be suspended. Please consult with the Office of the Provost or area Vice President for exceptions.
- All residential students are encouraged to return home immediately.
- Students who cannot return home will be allowed to remain in their residence halls, as planned, and one dining facility will remain open at each campus—Lincoln Center and Rose Hill—to serve those students and personnel on those campuses. (Students who have not already done so should contact Residential Life for authorization to stay, or to return early.)
- Staff from University Health Services, Residential Life and Student Affairs, Counseling and Psychological Services, Facilities Operations, Custodial, and Public Safety will continue to report to campus, subject to University needs.
- Staff who can work from home may be required to do so until further notice, and IT will provide both technology and connectivity assistance for those who require it.
- University personnel will be informed by their managers whether they are required to work from home or report to campus.

- Employee pay will continue to be disbursed on its regular schedule. Any employee currently receiving a paper check will receive it by mail at their address on file unless specific arrangements are made by contacting payrollinfo@fordham.edu.
- Human Resources Management has published guidance on pay and working from home for employees.
- Effective immediately, all University events are cancelled at least through March 29. Event organizers, including University sponsors of external groups, are responsible for informing guests and attendees that their event has been cancelled. This includes outside organizers renting space at Fordham, and Fordham events at off-campus venues in New York City.
- The only exceptions to the above are a limited number of intercollegiate athletic events at which only the athletes and coaches may be present.
- Until further notice, public Masses (including daily Mass) will be suspended. Beginning Sunday, March 15, the 11 a.m. Sunday Mass will be livestreamed from the University Church, but we ask regular congregants to watch online. Please consult the Campus Ministry website for the resumption of services and other ways to fulfill religious obligations.

These measures are in force until further notice. We will restore campus operations to normal as soon as we, in consultation with local health authorities, believe it is wise to do so. We will be communicating as far in advance as we can regarding significant events such as Commencement and Jubilee, but as of today we just don't have enough information to make those decisions.

We realize that these measures are disruptive, and possibly alarming. Let me assure you that we take them because we believe they are the best way to protect the health and wellbeing of the campus community. I have included our information on COVID-19 precautions, and University contact information, below for easy reference.

I am proud of the work ethic, dedication, and resiliency of the Fordham community, and I assure you we will get through this together. I would especially like to thank the faculty for the generosity of heart and deep care for our students that have they have shown in adjusting their teaching to accommodate our students' needs. You and your loved ones are in my prayers today and every day.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. McShane, S.J.

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Coronavirus Information and University Contacts

Again, the spread of the coronavirus is a rapidly evolving situation, with multiple new cases being reported daily in the United States and New York State. Please see fordham.edu/coronavirus for detailed information on the University's preparation and planning.

Any student experiencing symptoms (which may be similar to the flu or common cold, and may include fever and coughing) should call (rather than visit) University Health Services (UHS) immediately:

Lincoln Center: (212) 636-7160

• Rose Hill: (718) 817-4160

After business hours, contact the Department of Public Safety at (718) 817-2222. Someone will be available to take your call at this number 24/7.

Faculty and staff should contact their health care provider.

Prevention is very important. Here are ways to stay healthy:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water.
- Increase your fluid intake.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, mouth, and face.
- Keep home/personal spaces clean, disinfect common surfaces.
- Avoid contact with sick people.
- Cover your cough with tissue/paper towel or the crook of your elbow.
- If you have not received an influenza (flu) vaccine this year, do get one as soon as possible.
- If you are sick, please stay home and contact your medical provider.

Fordham custodial personnel continue to deep clean common areas and restrooms on an accelerated schedule.

In general, students, faculty, and staff should avoid non-essential international travel until advised otherwise by University administration.

For more information, visit:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/ https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/health/health-topics/coronavirus.page

If you have Fordham-specific questions please see the full contact list below.

Maureen Keown, MSN, Director University Health Services mkeown@fordham.edu

University Health Services health@fordham.edu Lincoln Center: (212) 636-7160

Rose Hill: (718) 817-4160

Department of Public Safety publicsafetyrh@fordham.edu (718) 817-2222 Available 24/7

Dean of Student Services gpappas@fordham.edu (718) 817-4395
Dean of Students (RH) deanrodgers@fordham.edu (718) 817-4755
Dean of Students (LC) deanofsalc@fordham.edu (212) 636-6250
Residential Life (RH) resliferh@fordham.edu (718) 817-3080
Residential Life (LC) reslifelc@fordham.edu (212) 636-7100

For more general questions, please consult the Student Handbook as a guide to Fordham offices.